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Security Council

Fifty-third Year

Provisional

3941st Meeting

Friday, 6 November 1998, 5.55 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Burleigh	(United States of America)
Members:	Bahrain	Mr. Buallay
	Brazil	Mr. Amorim
	China	Mr. Liu Jieyi
	Costa Rica	Mr. Sáenz Biolley
	France	Mr. Dejammet
	Gabon	Mr. Dangue Réwaka
	Gambia	Mr. Jagne
	Japan	Mr. Konishi
	Kenya	Mr. Mahugu
	Portugal	Mr. Monteiro
	Russian Federation	Mr. Granovsky
	Slovenia	Mr. Türk
	Sweden	Mr. Lidén
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon

Agenda

The situation in Croatia

Final report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Police Support Group (S/1998/1004)

98-86338 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 5.55 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Croatia

Final report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Police Support Group (S/1998/1004)

The President: I would like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Croatia, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Šimonović (Croatia) took a seat at the Council table.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the final report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Police Support Group (S/1998/1004).

Following consultations among members of the Security Council, I have been authorized to make the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the final report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations police support group (S/1998/1004), and in particular his description of the successful conclusion of the police support group mandate and the smooth transition of responsibilities to the police monitoring programme of the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The Council recalls the commitment of the Government of Croatia to ensure that OSCE police monitors will have the same access to police stations, documents and police operations, including investigations and checkpoints, as that accorded to the United Nations police support group.

"While the overall security situation in the Danube region remains satisfactory and police performance has improved notably and the Government of Croatia has taken steps to ensure that this continues, a worrying trend of ethnically motivated incidents persists in the region. The Security Council remains deeply concerned at the continuing departures of Serb residents, resulting to a considerable extent from these incidents. In this context, the Council is mindful of the importance of economic revitalization and reconstruction in creating an environment for sustained returns. The Council calls upon the Government of Croatia to make every effort to enhance public confidence in the police force and to recommit itself fully to the process of reconciliation between ethnic groups.

"The Security Council also calls upon the Government of Croatia to address the perceived lack of security which is contributing to continuing departures of Serbs from the region, and to remedy a number of problems which are preventing the full implementation of the 'Programme for the Return and Accommodation of Displaced Persons, Refugees and Exiled Persons' (S/1998/589). While noting that in his previous report (S/1998/887), the Secretary-General recognized progress in the implementation of this Programme, the Council calls upon the Government of Croatia promptly and fully to address all unresolved issues, which include restitution of property to Croatian citizens of Serb ethnicity, harmonization of legislation with the provisions of the return programme to enable non-discriminatory implementation, effective functioning of all housing commissions, equal access to reconstruction funding, restoration of rights to socially owned apartments, access to information, removal of impediments to the acquisition of documents needed for returnee status and benefits, and implementation of the law on convalidation.

"The Security Council expresses particular concern about the Joint Council of Municipalities, which represents all Serb ethnic communities in the region and which is described by the Secretary-General as being on the brink of collapse. The Council reiterates the continuing obligations of the Government of Croatia under the Basic Agreement as well as under international conventions and other agreements, and, in this context, stresses the importance of full implementation of the Programme for the Establishment of Trust, Accelerated Return

and Normalization of Living Conditions in the War-affected Regions of the Republic of Croatia (S/1997/772).

"The Security Council expresses its full support for the OSCE, which has now assumed the role of the United Nations support group, and looks forward to being kept informed, whenever necessary, of relevant developments in the Danube region of Croatia.

"The Security Council expresses its deep appreciation to all the men and women who participated in the United Nations peacekeeping operations in the Danube region of Croatia. Their dedication and perseverance made a significant contribution to regional peace."

This statement will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/1998/32.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.